

CALLING ON VIETNAM TO IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 243, which calls on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Father Nguyen Van Ly, Nguyen Van Dai, Le Thi Cong Nhan, and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

Mr. Speaker, as a co-sponsor of this resolution, I am extremely concerned and saddened by the resumption of repressive tactics of the Vietnamese Government. It was only six months ago that the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom removed Vietnam from its "Countries of Particular Concern" list, a list mandated by the International Religious Freedom Act which we passed in 1998. However, despite their removal from this list, the Vietnamese government instead chose to resort to arbitrary arrests and detentions of religious community leaders and human rights activists.

Father Nguyen Van Ly, a founder of the Committee for Human Rights in Vietnam, was arrested for what authorities called, "conducting propaganda activities to harm the security of state." Father Nguyen Van Ly has spent nearly thirteen years in prison for the fight for religious freedom and democracy in Vietnam. Just last month, two prominent Vietnamese human rights attorneys, Mr. Nguyen Van Dai and Ms. Le Thi Cong Nhan, were arrested for "spreading anti-government propaganda."

Mr. Speaker, the United States prides itself on the promotion of democracy, good governance, protection of human rights and religious freedom, and the advancement of the rule of law. We cannot look the other way when a "Most Favored Nation" is committing the grossest of human rights violations against its citizens. Congress cannot ignore the blatant disregard Vietnam is displaying towards its own people while it continues to detain and silence Vietnamese lawyers, democracy activists, and human rights advocates. As Vietnam aspires to integrate itself with the global economy, I believe it must also understand that the United States and the rest of the world is watching their actions and we condemn their atrocious digression and disregard for the most basic human rights.

NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH 2007

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I speak in support of H. Res. 29, in support of the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month 2007.

Mentoring is an extremely important responsibility. It provides our youth with positive role

models and aspirations for children that might find themselves directionless and without motivation. The benefits of mentoring are unquestioned; it helps with a young adult's individual development, and also prepares the next generation for their role in our community. Needless to say, I am grateful for all the mentors I have had throughout the years.

Some of the other wide ranging benefits of mentoring include improving relationships with parents, peers and teachers; staying motivated and focused on their education; facing daily challenges; exploring new careers and expanding their knowledge.

Research shows that youth who are actively engaged in high quality mentoring relationships show improvement in the areas of self-esteem, academics, and social skills. Those with a strong mentor are more likely to graduate from high school and are less likely than their peers to engage in harmful behavior such as drug or alcohol abuse.

In Eastern Washington, many organizations have undertaken this important task of mentoring. Inland NW Mentoring, based in Spokane, Washington, is a partnership of more than 20 organizations dedicated to a variety of mentoring services. This partnership is a collaboration of non-profits seeking "to connect people who wish to volunteer their knowledge and experience as mentors." I applaud the dedication of this consortium to ensure that tomorrow's leaders are equipped and envisioned through mentoring relationships.

Another institution that over the years provided structure and a goal-oriented education are the Boy Scouts of America. Specifically, in Eastern Washington there are more than 6,700 boy scouts in the Spokane area whose outstanding programs build character, leadership, citizenship and important life skills. The Scout leaders, volunteers and sponsors are making a positive impact on the leaders of tomorrow.

We must also applaud everyone who participates in Children of Promise, an organization that offers positive role models for children who have incarcerated parents. Other important organizations such as Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Inland Northwest ensure that kids in Eastern Washington have the friend they desperately need.

I would also like to salute the Gonzaga University Campus Kids program, which collaborates with four community elementary schools to provide student mentors to 4th, 5th and 6th graders. It is good for our young adults to be a part of encouraging and supporting those young people coming after them.

H. Res. 29 presents an opportunity to encourage more adults to invest in positive relationships with young people. It is an opportunity for us to say thank you to the many organizations who are already investing their time and energy to positively influence the next generation. Serving this next generation through mentoring will not only provide individual returns, but as a community and a society, we will see the lasting impacts of these important mentoring relationships.

IN RECOGNITION OF BRUCE VANOVEN

HON. BRAD ELLSWORTH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Gibson County Deputy Sheriff Bruce Vanoven for his dedication and valor in the line of duty.

On a July night in 2006, Deputy Vanoven responded to a distress call from Cameron White. White had been shot, stabbed, and left for dead in a Pike County cornfield.

Without knowledge of White's location or whether the suspect had left the scene, Vanoven searched the field for White and three other victims, who had already died from their injuries. As a result of his willingness to jeopardize his own safety to help others, Deputy Vanoven arrived in time to administer medical assistance to White until paramedics could reach the scene. His heroism saved Cameron White's life.

For his actions, Deputy Vanoven has received accolades from America's Most Wanted and the American Red Cross and was named Deputy of the Year by the Gibson County Sheriff's Department. As someone who has spent his career in law enforcement, it is a true honor to have this opportunity to recognize Bruce Vanoven. I commend his actions and thank him for his service to the people of southwest Indiana.

RECOGNIZING LAWRENCE GREEN

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 2, 2007

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Lawrence Green for being named "Driver of the Year" by the Environment Industry Associations. Mr. Green is an employee of IESI waste service and an exemplary citizen of Forest Hill, Texas.

The award is presented annually by the Environment Industry Associations. EIA recognizes the best drivers from the U.S. and Canada involved in solid waste hauling and recycling services who have demonstrated their commitment to their profession, shown a commitment to service and quality, and operated their vehicles in a safe and responsible manner.

Mr. Green is an employee of IESI, an environmental services company founded in 1995. The company has since expanded across the southern and northeastern United States. During his 24 years of service, he has collected an estimated 87,000 tons of waste in the Colleyville and Haltom City area. Over the course of 1.5 million miles, he has not had a single accident or complaint.

Lawrence Green's services have extended beyond his job description. On one occasion, he followed and apprehended some children whom he had seen breaking into a car. Another time, he carried home a girl who had fallen off of her bicycle. Although he has proven himself worthy of being promoted, he has turned down the offer on different occasions.

I would like to commend Mr. Green for his outstanding service and congratulate him for